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A SKY PANORAMA

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A SKY PANORAMA

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A SKY PANORAMA

A Sky Panorama

BY

EMMA C. DULANEY

BOSTON
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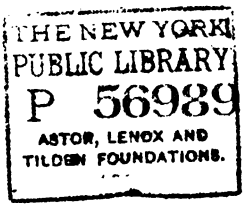

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A SKY PANORAMA

A SKY PANORAMA

From early morning, in hard, heavy showers,
The rain had fallen until the flowers,
The bushes, the vines, and every tree,
And the tasselled corn were wet as could be;
Not a dry spot anywhere on the ground,
Unless it was covered up, could be found.

Not a bird had sung its sweet, cheery song;
The honey-bees hid themselves all day long;
The butterflies, folding their bright wings, crept
Into the hedges, for shelter, and slept;
The fire-flies hid their queer candles bright,
To keep them dry so they'd burn well at night,
In case the rain-clouds should go rolling by
And let the twinkling stars trim up the sky.

The doves cooed softly within their snug home,
Not venturing from its shelter to roam;
The cute little "peepies" cuddled and slept
'Neath the soft wings of their mothers, who kept

Close watch lest some hungry hawk should swoop
down
And steal the soft balls of yellow and brown.
But the gawky goslings were not afraid.
They ran about in the showers, and played
With the dumpy ducklings who searched and found
The puddles the rain made in the soft ground;
Into them they tumbled, on mischief bent,
And paddled and ducked to their hearts' content.
Each calf nestled close to its mother's side,
But the little lambkins shivered, and cried,
And the skittish colts took the chance for a run
Around the big paddock, to have some fun.
The shrill-voiced Guinea fowls called out: "More
rain!"—
From their roosts in the haw-trees in the lane—
And old Towser whined, and Tabby purred loud,
And the children made such a doleful crowd,
That Mammy went to the kitchen to make
Honey-balls, jelly-pies, and ginger pound cake
For them to play party with; then, away
To the play-room she went the cloth to lay.

"Now, chil'n, yo' fix de table," said she,
"Whilse I slip down ter de spring-house ter see
Ef I kin spar' yo' er li'l' bit uv cream
Ter float dem honey-balls in. Hit won't seem
Lak er pahty 'less ev'ything des *so!*"
Then away she went, with her arms a-kimbo.

The "party" helped out but the afternoon
Stretched out *so* long the world seemed out of tune.
The showers kept falling, keeping things wet,
'Till near the right time for the Sun to set,
When, suddenly, out of his hiding place
He came, with a smile on his big round face,
To order the wind its cool breath to blow
On the rain-clouds so that home-ward they'd go,
And send forth many dazzling rays of light
To dance with the glistening rain-drops bright;
Then, ere he put on his funny night-cap,
And settled himself for a good sound nap,
He hung up—in the twinkling of an eye—
A great, beautiful rain-bow in the sky.

This pleased the children but, still, on the ground
They longed to go for a brisk run around.
"But," said Grandma, "'tis too wet; so you must be
Content to stay here on the porch with me."
'Twas a big, broad porch, and they played at tag
Until their interest began to flag,
Then Grandma called them, and quickly they came,
For she said: "Suppose you try a new game
And have *me* in it." "Oh, Grandma," cried they,
"Is it, truly, a really-righty *new* play?
Do tell its name!" "Well, first tell me," said she,
"Were not all of you taken, one evening, to see
A great Panorama which pleased you all so
That, for weeks afterward, where'er you'd go,
You talked of and praised it to all whom you knew?
Am I not right—isn't all of this true?
The children declared it was really so,
And everyone wished they, again, could go
To another, that very night, so that they
Could forget the miserable, rainy day.

Grandma smiled, and her eyes looked twinkly and
bright
As she said: "Well, every-one here I invite
To my grand Panorama, to-night, with me."
The children were puzzled, as well they might be,
And said: "You forget, Grandma—such a show
Has *lots of pictures* to look at, you know,
And—how could *you* 'range to make them slide by?
And you *must* have *pictures* to show, or—why—
You're laughing, Grandma, and just making fun
'Cause we've been so grumpy, not seeing the sun!"
Grandma laughed merrily, shaking her head—
"No, indeed; I mean every word that I've said;
My show will very soon open," said she,
"And I think I can promise that you will see
Pictures of things and folks you all know well—
I'll be Director and their names will tell.

"*Mine* will be a cloud Panorama, you see,
And that big patch of sky my canvas will be.

A Sky Panorama

"Here comes the first portrait—look well at that!
Isn't it the image of Tab, our old cat?
There comes another—now, wouldn't you think
'Twas lazy old Towser, taking a drink?
And that darker cloud, where several meet,
Is Mammy, in turban and apron neat.
Now, look at that butterfly—only behold
Its great gauzy wings all spangled with gold!
Just see that swan sailing grandly along;
And that wild goose—"Honk—honk!" would be
its song.
There are some horses—my, how they're prancing!
And see that sailor—a horn-pipe he's dancing.
And that big basket of roses—look there—
It's tilting and spilling them every-where!
Over that rock is peeping a bunny;
Look, children, isn't he cute and funny?

There's Uncle Sam, smoothing his old beaver's nap;
And Columbia, wearing her star-trimmed cap.

That the Eagle is near needs not to be told;
He's poised just above them—fierce, proud, and bold.
Not far away you see old Liberty Bell—
Its form, up there, you can trace very well.
Study it well, now, as it passes by
For, on that memorable day in July,
When the great document was drawn up, and read,
Declaring our Independence, 'tis said
This bell was chosen to ring, loud and clear,
The wonderful news for the people to hear.
So, high up in the belfry where it hung,
Backward and forward right gladly it swung,
Telling the story, again and again,
So filled with joy that 'twas nearly rent in twain,
But the nation *loves* it, despite the crack,
And the loss of its sweet voice—which ne'er came back—
And not for the world's store of shining gold
Will our dear Liberty Bell e'er be sold!

A Sky Panorama

"Over there, where it looks like 'tis snowing,
I see a lion with great mane flowing;
Watch him, now—see, he is turning around
To look at that angry bull pawing the ground.
And see that big turtle swimming about;
And there's a tapir with his queer snout.
Now comes a castle from whose turrets high
Banners are fluttering against the sky;
And down by the draw-bridge a chariot stands,
Whose driver awaits his master's commands.

"Who comes, now, children, so daintily dressed
In dew-spangled tissue robe—have you guessed?
'Tis Titania, the Fairy Queen, sitting there
Throned in a silver-trimmed alabaster chair
'Round which is garlanded white blossoms sweet,
Which fall in clusters at her tiny feet.
Look at that beautiful deer standing there
With his antlered head raised high in the air.
See that great ostrich—he's taking a walk;
And that grey owl who looks wise enough to talk.

A Sky Panorama

Did you ever hear about the little boy
Who, instead of being a pleasure and joy
To his parents, did little but howl,
And was changed, at last, into a grey owl?
'Tis said 'twas done, in the long, long ago,
When strange things used to happen, you know.

"This boy, 'twas said, would kick, and scratch, and cry—
No matter who chanced to be passing by—
Whenever his good old nurse combed his hair.
'I *like* tangles in it!' he would declare.
So, to punish him, they let him have his way—
Never once dreaming that, day after day,
His hair would grow down on his face till he
Was the queerest-looking boy anyone could see.
He laughed, and didn't care till there came a day
When his tangled locks began to turn grey,
Then he ***begged*** his nurse to comb his hair.
She looked on his head but could find none there—
Instead of the curly locks, once so brown,
There were only fine grey feathers and down!

And very soon afterward it was found
That his eyes were growing big and round;
That a beak was taking the place of his nose;
And that he was wearing feathers for clothes.
He soon had to fly when he meant to walk;
And all he could say when he wanted to talk,
To anyone, was 'Tu-whit,' and 'Tu-whoo'!
But 'twas too late the mischief to undo—
The disobedient boy who would howl,
When his hair was combed, had turned to an owl!
Children, 'tis only a story I've told,
But in it are some of Truth's grains of gold;
Remember it, then, when, (should there come a day)
Like the Owl-Boy, *you're* tempted to *disobey!*

"See that pea-cock, there, with uplifted head—
He forgets his big, ugly feet, 'tis said,
And thinks he's a beauty because he can
Make of his tail a most gorgeous fan.
From that spot where the clouds seem to wobble
Can't you imagine you hear 'Gobble-gobble!'?
There you will behold King Turk, without doubt—
See His Majesty's pride as he struts about!

There's a wee maid crying over milk spilt.
And you'll surely know *that*—The House that Jack
Built.
Doesn't it look familiar? If 'twould halt
Maybe we could get a glimpse of the malt.
Now, who is this, looking so sweet and good?
Who, indeed, but Little Red Riding-Hood!
See how she's tripping along without fear,
Or the least thought that the old Wolf is near;
But there he is, children, skulking, you see—
The wicked old scamp—behind that big tree.

"Here come other folks whom you know so well
That there's really no need their names to tell,
But, being Director, my duty I'll do
And introduce each, as they come, to you.

"The first, an old lady, you all must see
Is bobbing her head, and smiling at me
As if she would like to tell me some news;
She's an old friend of ours—dear Goody Two-Shoes.
And there's Mother Hubbard walking alone,
Trying to find her poor doggy a bone.

And Little Boy Blue—he's blowing his horn
To drive the hungry cows out of the corn;
While, just beyond, there's dear Little Bo-Peep
Peering this way, and that, for her lost sheep.
There's a lean man, and a woman so fat,
I'm sure they're Mr. and Mrs. Jack Spratt.
Right over here sits old, jolly King Cole
Smoking his pipe; by his side is his bowl;
And, standing before him, his Fiddlers Three
Are playing his favorite tune—'Fiddle-de-Dee'.
That's Miss Muffet, eating her curd and whey;
And there comes the Spider to scare her away.
And there are some Pixies, from woodland dells,
Ringing and swinging snowy lily-bells.
Look at Humpty Dumpty on that high wall—
Take care, Humpty, or you'll get another fall!
Here's Mother Goose, with her specs on her nose,
Waddling along on her funny webbed toes;
And the Old Woman, who went up so high,
With the broom that swept cob-webs from the sky;
And the busy Maid who had her poor nose
Nipped off by the black-bird, while hanging up clothes.

And that's the King who counted his money,
And the Queen who feasted on bread and honey.

"Just look at Jack—so venturesome, tho' small—
Climbing to the top of his Bean-Stalk tall!
And Simple Simon—silly as a loon—
Is leading the cow that jumped over the moon.
There's the Old Woman who lived in a Shoe
Showing us some of her children—a few;
And there stands the man all Tattered and Torn,
Feeding grain to the Cock that Crowed at Morn.
Who is *that* little maiden—can you tell?
I'm sure every one of you know her well,
For over her woes you have often cried;
When she grew happy your tears quickly dried;
And you rejoiced when good fortune befell her.
I *thought* you'd guess—yes, she's sweet Cinderella!

"Just see those Brownies, there, over the way,
Aren't they having a good time at play?
On that to-boggan slide's slippery track
Their sleds go down, but they never come back.

That bowed-down old man is poor Uncle Ned—
See, he's got no wool on the top of his head!
If some of Mammy's hoe-cake he could eat
Wouldn't he find it a delicious treat?
Here comes a queer looking craft—Noah's Ark!
He patched it, you've heard, with hickory bark.
There's the little window the Dove passed through
When off on her land-seeking mission she flew.
On the tiny deck Noah used to walk
Whene'er the animals began to talk,
For 'twas 'Bedlam let loose', so we are told,
When all their voices to-gether were rolled.
Never forget that this queer old house-boat
Was the first and the best one ever a-float.
Now, see that circus-man—the jolly clown;
Just look at him standing there up-side down!
He's so used to posing, that way, on his head,
He often forgets he has feet, 'tis said.
See that organ-grinder? He's coming near
Hoping the clinking of pennies to hear;
And there's his old monkey, too—watch him, now,
He'll doff his odd cap and make a grand bow.

A Sky Panorama

Look right over there—see that big bull-frog?
He's going to dive from that floating log,
There's his cousin, too, who 'would a-wooing go',
With a big toad-stool umbrella for show.
Look—there's a soldier, wearing a cocked hat,
And beating on his drum 'Rat-a-tat-tat'!
And there's a balloon; not a bit does it roll—
Maybe its pilot will find the North Pole!
Oh, children, see that demure-looking ape—
'Round her shoulders she's draped a furry cape!
And there's an elephant, his trumpet blowing
To tell all his friends which way he's going.

"Look, now, at that funny old Kangaroo!
What do you suppose he's going to do?
Why, play leap-frog. He'll jump up in the air
Like a rubber ball on the bounce—see there!
There's a silly hyena ready to laugh
At that comical-looking, long-necked giraffe;
And, close by, a walrus is coming in sight,
Bringing his ugly tusks, so sharp and white.
That ice-berg, you'll find, holds a Polar bear
Which looks like a snow-statue standing there.

A Sky Panorama

Do you see that tall thing swirling about
In a whirl-a-gig way? It's a water-spout
That's off on its travels, seeking for prey.
It's fortunate no ships are in its way,
Or to their doom in the sea they'd be sent,
For a water-spout is on destruction bent.
There's a lady's portrait—her long, flossy curls
Are adorned, you will see, with strings of pearls.
And look at that snow-fort—its flags, raised high
Are out-lined against that clear bit of sky.
But—what can the matter be? (There's no noise)
Where's its brave defenders—the fun-loving boys?
Ah, here comes one, full of mischief, you see,
For he's aiming a big snow-ball at me!
See that pretty cascade! It gently laves
The face of the cliff it leaps from; but its waves,
On the rocks, below, roughly seethe and foam
Ere they start, again, on their way to roam.
There goes a wind-mill with its queer sails—
On windy days they beat the air like flails!
If the miller looks from the window at me
I'll ask him to tell us 'bout the Zuyder Zee.

A Sky Panorama

"Oh—here comes a ball of concentrated fun—
A comical thing, as round as the Sun!
It has no feet, so it never can walk;
It has a head, but it never can talk;
Its nose is triangular; its grinning mouth
Looks like a cave running North-East by South;
Its eyes slant upward; its color is yellow;
But its friends declare it 'a prime, good fellow'.
Its kindred you've often eaten in pie—
Can you guess what 'tis as it goes rolling by?
'Jack-o-Lantern'? There, you *did* guess it! Well,
I felt quite sure that its name you could tell.
Now, look at that fox creeping there—the sly thing!
He's gathering himself up for a spring
On some un-suspecting chicken, I fear,
Which, very likely, is loitering near
And, oh, see that comet with tail out-spread,
And a beautiful, flashing star for a head!
What a *big* kite! Hasn't it gone up high?
'Twould make us a hiding-place if 'twere nigh.
There—it changed its course and took a new trail,
And bade us good-by with a flip of its tail.

See that bat and its baby—un-canny things! —
They are stretching wide their queer shield-like
wings;
Watch them,—the story goes that they delight
In tangling the hair of children, at night.
Here comes an immense crab scuttling side-wise,
And staring about with its big, bulging eyes;
Run back to your home, Crabby, ere 'tis too late,
Or a net will land you, as sure as fate!

Now, look at that great tiger crouching there,
Waiting for prey to take back to his lair;
See how he watches—very patient is he,
But as cunning and cruel as can be.
When you go to the Zoo, if you have no fears,
Stand near by a tiger and look at his ears—
On the inside tip of each one you'll espy
A spot which looks exactly like an eye.
He sets his ears straight up when he goes to sleep,
And, when enemies softly upon him creep,
Those *make-believe* eyes, peering over the top

Of the jungle-grass, bring them to a stop;
And, thinking the tiger is *wide a-wake*
And *waiting for them,* to their heels they take
And put all the distance they can between
Themselves and the dreadful eyes they've seen.

"Here comes Father Time through that great arched
door;
He waits for no one—neither rich, nor poor—
But shoulders his sickle, and watches the sand
Running in the hour-glass in his hand;
For part of his wonderful work, you know,
Is to count the hours as onward they go.

"And there's another old man coming near.
Look at him, children, you need have no fear,
For he's a favorite old friend whose fame
Has flown the world over. Can you guess his name?
'Santa Claus'? Yes; so jolly and merry,
Whose nose, 'tis said, looks like a ripe cherry.
From under his brows, so shaggy and white,
His eyes shine and twinkle like stars at night.

'Tis always winter where he lives, we're told,
But, wrapped in furs, he cares not for the cold.
He's going to speak, and we'll surely hear,
If we listen with Imagination's ear,
And understand, too, what he has to say.
Hear him! 'I'm taking a journey, to-day,
To call on my old friend—the Man in the Moon—
But expect to be home again, quite soon.
I'm not sure that I shall return this way,
So think I'd better take this chance to say
I've lots of gifts stored for *good* girls and boys,
And, for the little tots, plenty of toys;
But, for *bad* children, I've nothing at all
But peeled birch-switches, to hang on the wall
For them to be whipped with when they don't obey.
I haven't the time to say much to-day,
But, before I leave, just let me tell you
That, if *you've* been *bad,* the best thing to do
Will be to make a *quick* change for the *better*
Or 'twill do no good to write me a letter.

Don't forget—or you'll surely have to grieve
When I make my visit on Christmas Eve!
But, really, I must go—good-by, and good-night'!
My—see how quickly he vanished from sight!"

Grandma wiped her glasses and put them away.
"Don't you think we've ended well a bad day?"
She asked. "But the stars have punched my canvas
blue
Full of 'peep-bo' holes so they can look through;
And Mother Nature's turned her light down so
low
That I reckon I'll have to close my show."

"Dat's raight, too," a voice said, from the door-
way,
And there stood Mammy holding a big tray,
"Cos baid-time's comin' fuh yo' chil'n, yo' know.
I wuz 'feared, mebby, dat, atter de show,
Yo'-alls mought be tiahed an' hongry, too,
So I's fetched yo' some 'freshments—jes' er few—
Dat I made dis atternoon so I c'u'd s'prise

Yo'-alls w'en yo' come down outen de skies.
'Twon' hu't yo' er bit ter eat 'em, at night—
Yo'needn' be 'feared, fuh dey's cool an' light.
Heah's lemon ice-cream (de bes' I c'u'd mek)
An' de mos' 'lishus loaf uv sponge-cake.
De tray I'll set down by yuh Gran'-mothah—
Be shuah ter serbe huh fus', den he'p each othah,
An' ha'f houah atter yo's finished yo' go
Ter baid—min' dat, now!" Then, with arms a-kimbo,
And a shake of her head she went away,
Leaving the children, like bees, 'round the tray.

With the dainties it held, so cold, and so sweet,
All were soon served and did leisurely eat,
And, when the last crumb had vanished from sight,
Close beside Grand-ma, to left and to right,
They crowded (as children will do, you know,)
To thank her for inviting them to her "show";
And beg her to think of another new play,
And keep it on hand for the next rainy day.